

Walter Morrison

T/SOR/21/2/1

Walter Morrison, who has died aged 79, was a leading member of the Scottish Committee of 100, dedicated to non-violent direct action. As such, he was in the thick of the massive movement of the early 1960s against the Polaris base at Holy Loch, on the Clyde. I remember him standing in Glasgow streets, and at demonstrations around Scotland, surrounded by hostile crowds, arguing the case against nuclear weapons.

The eldest of five children of a working-class family, Morrison was raised in Govan, Glasgow. In 1940, the 16-year-old lied about his age and joined the army, ending up in the Parachute Regiment. Asked during a visit by George VI how he was being treated, he apparently told the king: "Terrible." He was sent to India on the first available troop ship.

Morrison's pacifism was born in the sub-continent, at the time of independence demonstrations of 1942. He told me that he announced that he would personally shoot any soldier who turned his gun on a woman or a child, and would shoot any officer who gave such an order. He was placed in solitary confinement.

After the war, Morrison worked as a marble polisher, until he was sacked for his political activities in 1962. After a year running his own stone-polishing business, he went bust and became an engineer at pacifist Tom McAlpine's "factory for peace".

After I was arrested in Spain in 1964, for my part in a plot to assassinate General Franco, Morrison picketed the Spanish



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Morrison ... Polaris protest

ish embassy in London — only to be bundled off by the police and interrogated about our relationship, the Committee of 100 and Scots Against War, a group that had set fire to Ardnamadam pier, a service point for the Polaris fleet.

Sacked from the factory for peace in 1964, he went back to stone polishing until his retirement, on medical grounds, in 1976. He then became a pivotal figure in the Corkerhill community council in Glasgow's southside. Thus it was, in 1998, that he was made an MBE for his services to the community.

He told me that, at Buckingham Palace, he remarked to the Queen about her corgis: "Ma'am, if those dogs ran around like that in Corkerhill, where I come from, I'd shoot the lot of them." With a twinkle in his eye, of course.

His marriage ended in the 1970s. He is survived by his partner Betty Campbell, his daughter Leigh and his son Grant.

Stuart Christie

Walter Morrison, activist, born March 20 1924; died February 6 2004

Geoffrey Parker, educationist, 71; **Lord Plumb**, former farmer, London 20; **John** ...

journalist, historian, 57; **Prof Guy Housley**, civil engineer, Eo ...